

Date: January 13, 2016

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Thomas J. Bonfield, City Manager
Subject: Response to Recommendations Presented by the Human Relations Commission – Water Management

Executive Summary

Attached is the Management response to the Water Management Department recommendations presented by the Human Relations Commission to the City Council.

Recommendation

To receive a report on the Administration's response to the Human Relations Commission recommendations.

Background

Former employees of the Water Management Department and Water Management Department staff came to Council and alleged that there were racial inequities in the treatment, discipline and promotion of employees within the Department. The City Council recommended to the group that they take their concerns to the Human Relations Commission (HRC) for further discussion. The HRC consists of 15 individuals who are appointed by the City Council.

On November 11, 2014, Nathanette Mayo, an employee of the City of Durham Water Management Department and a member of UE 150 Durham City Workers Union made a presentation to the Commission alleging discrimination and unequal treatment of employees within the Water Management Department. Following Ms. Mayo's presentation, former employees of the Water Management Department spoke to the Commission about alleged unequal treatment that they experienced or witnessed while at the Water Management Department. Based on the allegations that had been presented and the documents that were submitted, the subcommittee requested information from Human Resources for further discussion.

The subcommittee convened meetings, conducted interviews and collected data relative to the allegations that had been presented to them, and eventually settled on nine recommendations.

The HRC presented their recommendations to the Mayor and City Council during the November 5, 2015 City Council Work Session. Additionally, in December 2015 the HRC sent a follow up communication to the Mayor and City Council with a response to the Mayor's request for information on best practices relating to the City's employee grievance procedure and drug testing policy. The HRC indicated that it does not have the professional expertise or resources to review best practices in the areas of municipal grievance procedures or drug testing. However, they recommend the City Council ask a third-party organization like the

International Public Management Association for Human Resources or a similar such accrediting agency to conduct an internal review and determine whether the City's existing policies meet best practices.

Each of the nine original recommendations was evaluated and a response is provided. Additionally, the attached responses take into consideration the December 2015 follow up communication from the HRC to the Mayor and City Council.

Issues/Analysis

The issues and analysis associated with each recommendation are included in the attached report.

Alternatives

City Council could choose not to receive the attached report at this time.

Financial Impact

Not Applicable

SDBE Summary

Not Applicable

Attachments

Administration Response to Durham Human Relations Commission Report